Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, beginning on line 1 and ending on line 11, with the following amended paragraph, to correct a clerical error:

b) Alternatively, the multi-channel information can be encrypted at the transmitting site by a common DED(T) 66 (shown by dotted lines), and decrypted by a common DDD (R) 68 at the receiving site. If OADM is inserted in the optical communication link, it can be provided with a local DDD(L) 70 at its input, and a local DED(L) 72 at its output. All the devices 66, 68, 70 and 72 may use similar encryption/decryption keys, but should be suitably synchronized. However, the DED 66 and DDD 70, and DED~~64~~72 and DDD 68 may work in pairs, so that each of the pairs has its own encryption/decryption key.
c) Various combinations of the per-channel encryption described in a) and common encryption described in (b) can be proposed, i.e. the encryption technique may include encryption of both information transmitted via a particular optical channel, and information transmitted over a particular optical fiber.